

percentage of total plan outlay is on decline from 1.4% in the First Plan to 0.6% in the 8th Plan.

(c) and (d). Efforts are being made for obtaining enhanced allocation of funds for National Highways. However, it depends on the availability of resources at the National level.

#### Import of Medical Equipment

1365. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL :

SHRI PINAKI MISRA :

SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ :

SHRI SANAT MEHTA :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Delhi High Court has directed the Director General Health Services (DGHS) to investigate into the import of medical equipment amounting to Rs.5000 crore by various hospitals by availing illegally and unauthorisedly duty free imports; and

(b) if so, the details of the findings and the persons apprehended in connection therewith?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) and (b). As per the order of the Delhi High Court, an enquiry into the issue of Custom Duty Exemption Certificates in certain cases is being conducted by the Chief Vigilance Officer of this Ministry. The matter is subjudice.

#### Child Mortality Rate

1366. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the child mortality rate in teh country is very high;

(b) the main factors responsible therefor;

(c) the state-wise position during last three years; and

(d) the specific steps proposed to be taken to reduce and then to stop the child mortality rate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) and (b). As per the Registrar General of India the estimated death rate for children in 1993 was 23.7 per 1000 children in the age group 0-4 years. Prematurity, acute respiratory infection, diarrhoeal diseases and vaccine preventable diseases are among the major cases of death in children. Illiteracy, poverty and inadequate infrastructure development and access to health services are some of the factors which contribute to child mortality.

(c) The estimated child (0-4 years) mortality rate for 1991, 1992 and 1993 for major States are given in the attached statement.

(d) Under the Child Survival and Safe Motherhood Programme immunization, Prophylaxis against vitamin A deficiency, appropriate management of diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infections and essential newborn care are being provided to prevent morbidity and mortality in children.

#### STATEMENT

*Child mortality (Age-Specific death rate for the age-group 0-4 years) major States, 1991-93*

	1991	1992	1993
Andhra Pradesh	21.3	20.0	17.1
Assam	32.4	30.5	36.1
Bihar	22.0	26.8	25.3
Gujarat	23.3	23.7	20.7
Haryana	23.0	22.8	20.3
Karnataka	23.6	21.7	20.0
Kerala	4.3	3.9	3.4
Madhya Pradesh	44.5	38.5	36.9
Maharashtra	16.3	15.9	14.1
Orissa	39.0	33.4	33.7
Punjab	17.0	17.4	16.1
Rajasthan	30.9	33.6	26.2
Tamil Nadu	16.1	15.3	13.6
Uttar Pradesh	35.6	37.8	32.9
West Bengal	20.6	18.4	17.0

Source : Sample Registration System

[Translation]

#### Procurement of Uniforms and Blankets

1367. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether uniforms, blankets etc. were procured for soldies from March 1,1996 to date;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total amount spent thereon during the above period;

(d) whether the Government have received complaints against their inferior quality;

(e) if so, the details thereof for the last three years; and

(f) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regards?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) to (f). The procurement of uniform and blankets for the soldiers of Indian Army is made on continuous basis throughout the year. The details of the procurement of uniform and blanket made from 1.3.96 to 30.6.96 from Addl. Director General (ordnance Factories) and Handloom Sector (ACASH) and Trade is as under :-

S.No.	Item	Quantity (Nos.)	Amount (Rs.)
1.	Shirt Plain Weave Polyester Cotton	90,506	2,12,68,910
2.	Trouser Plain Weave Polyester Cotton	1,04,745	3,08,99,775
3.	Blanket	1,94,423	5,76,62,475
4.	Boot Ankle DVS	2,38,454	10,37,27,490
5.	Socks Men OG	6,84,996	3,76,23,620

The defect reports during last three years from the user units in respect of some of the items given above were received and were investigated by Director General Quality Assurance. The Defects in the uniform were in the nature of colour fading, colour not matching. As far as Boots are concerned, the defects was in the nature of separation of sole. Based on the findings of the defect Report investigations, Army authorities have advised inspection staff to keep strict watch on quality and to advise Ordnance Equipment Factory, Kanpur, to improve quality standards.

[English]

#### Super National Highways

1368. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY :  
SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have invited bids to construct Super National Highways in the country under public-private joint venture programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof with State-wise break-up; and

(c) the total investment required for the purpose and sources of funds thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) No, Sir. However, National Highways Authority of India and invited global tenders from private sector for carrying out the feasibility studies

for the proposed Super National Highways. In response, 22 bidders, Indian as well as Foreign, submitted their proposals.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

[Translation]

#### Women Development Corporation

1369. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA :  
SHRI KASHIRAM RANA :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Women Development Corporation has since been set up in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the names of districts where it has been set up; and

(c) the details of work undertaken by the Corporation, till date?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Gujrat Women Economic Development Corporation Limited is working in the entire state of Gujarat.

(c) The Corporation has taken up the following schemes for the empowerment and economic development of women :

- Skill training schemes for women in various trades;
- Credit scheme for women through nationalised banks for starting income generating activities;
- Margin money assistance to women's industrial cooperatives;
- Assured marketing facility for women's co-operative societies;
- Awareness generation schemes; and
- marketing facilities for women entrepreneurs/ women co-operatives etc. by organising exhibition-cum-sale at different places in the country.

[English]

#### Nuclear Programme

1370. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to Indian Express dated April 14, 1996 under the caption "US Report says India willing to go-slow on Nuclear Programme";